



Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
www.ridoe.net

Greenbush Elementary School

WEST WARWICK

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

April 1, 2005



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

**RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF REGENTS
FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

James A. DiPrete, Chairman

Jo Eva Gaines, Vice Chair

Colleen Callahan, Secretary

Frank Caprio

Representative Paul W. Crowley

Sue P. Duff

Senator Hanna M. Gallo

Gary E. Grove

Patrick A. Guida

Mario A. Mancieri

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION**

Peter McWalters, Commissioner

**The Board of Regents does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, sex, sexual
orientation, race, religion, national origin, or disability.**

For information about SALT, please contact:

Rick Richards

401-222-4600, x 2194

or

salt@ridoe.net.

1. INTRODUCTION	1
<i>THE PURPOSE AND LIMITS OF THIS REPORT</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>SOURCES OF EVIDENCE</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>USING THE REPORT</i>	<i>2</i>
2. PROFILE OF GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	4
3. PORTRAIT OF GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT.....	5
4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING	6
<i>CONCLUSIONS</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>IMPORTANT THEMATIC FINDINGS IN STUDENT LEARNING</i>	<i>7</i>
5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING	8
<i>CONCLUSIONS</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>COMMENDATIONS FOR GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WEST WARWICK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.....</i>	<i>10</i>
6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING	11
<i>CONCLUSIONS</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>COMMENDATIONS FOR GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WEST WARWICK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.....</i>	<i>13</i>
7. FINAL ADVICE TO GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	14
ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT	15
REPORT APPENDIX	17
<i>SOURCES OF EVIDENCE FOR THIS REPORT.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>STATE ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.....</i>	<i>18</i>
THE GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM	23
MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM	24
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF VISIT TEAM	25

1. INTRODUCTION

The Purpose and Limits of This Report

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Greenbush Elementary School from March 28 - April 1, 2005.

The SALT visit report makes every effort to provide your school with a valid, specific picture of how well your students are learning. The report also portrays how the teaching in your school affects learning, and how the school supports learning and teaching. The purpose of developing this information is to help you make changes in teaching and the school that will improve the learning of your students. The report is valid because the team's inquiry is governed by a protocol that is carefully designed to make it possible for visit team members to make careful judgments using accurate evidence. The careful exercise of professional judgment makes the findings useful for school improvement because these judgments identify where the visit team thinks the school is doing well, and where it is doing less well.

The major questions the team addressed were:

How well do students learn at Greenbush Elementary School?

How well does the teaching at Greenbush Elementary School affect learning?

How well does Greenbush Elementary School support learning and teaching?

The following features of this visit are at the heart of the report:

Members of the visit team are primarily teachers and administrators from Rhode Island public schools. The majority of team members are teachers. The names and affiliations of the team members are listed at the end of the report.

The team sought to capture what makes this school work, or not work, as a public institution of learning. Each school is unique and the team has tried to capture what makes Greenbush Elementary School distinct.

The team did not compare this school to any other school.

When writing the report, the team deliberately chose words that it thought would best convey its message to the school, based on careful consideration of what it had learned about the school.

The team reached consensus on each conclusion, each recommendation, and each commendation in this report.

The team made its judgment explicit.

This report reflects only the week in the life of the school that was observed and considered by this team. The report is not based on what the school plans to do in the future or on what it has done in the past.

This school visit is supported by the Rhode Island Department of Education as a component of School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT). To gain the full advantages of a peer visiting system, RIDE deliberately did not participate in the active editing of this SALT visit report. That was carried out by the team's Chair with the support of Catalpa. Ltd.

The team closely followed a rigorous protocol of inquiry that is rooted in Practice-based Inquiry™ (Catalpa Ltd). The detailed *Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit, 2nd Edition* describes the theoretical constructs behind the SALT visit and stipulates the many details of the visit procedures. The *Handbook* and other relevant documents are available at www.Catalpa.org. Contact Rick Richards at (401) 222-4600 x 2194 or ride0782@ride.ri.net for further information about the SALT visit protocol.

SALT visits undergo rigorous quality control. Catalpa Ltd. monitors each visit and determines whether the report can be endorsed. Endorsement assures the reader that the team and the school followed the visit protocol. It also assures that the conclusions and the report meet specified standards.

Sources of Evidence

The Sources of Evidence that this team used to support its conclusions are listed in the appendix.

The team spent a total of over 93 hours in direct classroom observation. Most of this time was spent in observing complete lessons or classes. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than once. Also, the team spent a total of over 37 hours interviewing teachers throughout the school.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 28 hours in team meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time does not include the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

The team did agree by consensus that every conclusion in this report is:

- ◆ *Important enough to include in the report*
- ◆ *Supported by the evidence the team gathered during the visit*
- ◆ *Set in the present, and*
- ◆ *Contains the judgment of the team*

Using the Report

This report is designed to have value to all audiences concerned with how Greenbush Elementary School can improve student learning. However, the most important audience is the school itself.

How your school improvement team reads and considers the report is the critical first step. RIDE will provide a SALT Fellow to lead a follow-up session with the school improvement team to help start the process. With support from the West Warwick School District School Improvement Coordinator and from SALT fellows, the school improvement team should carefully decide what changes it wants to make in learning, teaching, and the school, and amend its School Improvement Plan to reflect these decisions.

The West Warwick School District, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Greenbush Elementary School as it works to strengthen its performance.

Any reader of this report should consider the report as a whole. A reader who only looks at recommendations misses important information.

2. PROFILE OF GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Opened in 1989, Greenbush Elementary School, a NEASC accredited school, is located in the Crompton section of West Warwick, Rhode Island. School-wide themes at Greenbush include good citizenship, health and vocabulary growth. This facility serves students in kindergarten through grade five. There are four half-day kindergartens and four classes at each grade level. There are two special education social intervention classes, one full-time inclusion model class and two part-time inclusion model classes, as well as special education resource support for the other three grades.

There are 475 students enrolled at Greenbush Elementary School. Of these, 87% are white, 5% are Hispanic, 4% are African American, 3% are Asian/Pacific Islander, and less than 1% is American Indian/Alaskan. Nineteen percent of the students receive free or reduced price lunch. Seventeen percent of the students receive special education services, and less than 1% of the students are monitored for ESL services.

The Greenbush faculty and staff consist of one principal, twenty-two classroom teachers, five special education teachers and six specialist teachers to service children in the areas of art, physical education, library, computer education, music and guidance. Other staff members include a 'Reading First' literacy coach, a reading specialist, a part-time reading consultant, a full-time speech pathologist, a school nurse and a part-time social worker. Additional services are provided to Greenbush students by an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, a school psychologist, a vision specialist and an adaptive physical education specialist.

The support staff includes a supervisory aide, six teacher assistants (five full-time and one part-time), three custodians (two full-time and one part-time), three secretaries (one full-time and two part-time), and two part-time lunch assistants, as well as three members of the kitchen staff. Many volunteers also support the students and teachers, as well as the school, in general including mentors, parents, parent-tutors, retired teachers and administrators, and other community resources, such as foster grandparents. Also, many student teachers and paraprofessionals from several universities and colleges support the work of this school.

As a 'Reading First' school, literacy is a priority at Greenbush. This coincides with a district initiative in this area. The school has implemented a new reading series, and teachers receive training in all areas of literacy instruction. Fourth and fifth grade teachers and the specialist teachers work together in a small learning community to continue their professional development in literacy. In an effort to become a more inclusive learning environment for all students, teachers in the second, third and fourth grades are currently piloting special needs inclusion models of classroom instruction.

Numerous programs are provided to students and their families to develop a whole-school learning community. Programs to promote healthy interactions among multi-age groups include peer mediators, mentoring programs, the Good Citizenship Recognition program and the Buddy Reading program. To help all students learn the school holds before and after school programs and ramp-up programs. To enrich students' learning experiences the school offers art club, student council, fourth grade hand bell choir, fifth grade chorus and an instrumental music program. The school has an active parent teacher association and various community outreach efforts including health fair days, scholarship drives and blood drives, as well as programs, such as Pennies for Patients and Jump Rope for Heart.

3. PORTRAIT OF GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Colorful walls, words of the day and smiling faces greet visitors when they enter Greenbush Elementary School. This impressive school values and embraces all students. It has established an exceptional learning environment that recognizes school-wide strengths. Everyone here works together to address the challenges. The strong faculty and staff, a dedicated school principal, a variety of community volunteers and district personnel collaborate in a true feeling that they can make a positive difference in the students' and one another's lives.

The diverse population of learners, who attend this school, receives a solid education. The students enjoy coming to school each day and feel welcomed in this safe and nurturing environment. Students say that their teachers care about them and that learning at this school is fun. They work well together and, rather than criticize, they celebrate one another's differences. While not all students, particularly those with special needs, meet appropriate academic standards, all of them like to read, write and problems solve, and they are proud and excited about the progress they make.

The teachers at Greenbush are clearly dedicated to their jobs and love teaching. Both professionally and personally they enjoy working with the students and with one another. They deliberately plan together for student learning and celebrate their students' successes. Teachers have a sophisticated knowledge of reading instruction and assessment and effectively use this to assure that students become engaged and successful readers. While teachers competently teach writing and problem solving to their students, they recognize the need to improve in these areas to match the quality of their reading instruction.

The principal is the common thread that holds this school together. He is a strong leader, who both guides the school and challenges it to improve. He walks the long halls of the school throughout the day to keep his finger on the pulse of the school and to make himself a 'real person' to the students here. The principal has a vision that Greenbush will be a high-performing school and, through collaboration with his faculty and staff, he actively works to make this a reality.

Rather than accept its label as a 'low-performing' school, the Greenbush faculty and staff have identified and implemented strategies to change this designation. The entire K-3 faculty agreed to be trained in Reading First, as an effective means to improve the reading abilities of all students. The school adopted inclusion models for most special needs students to provide them with more equitable instruction and help bring all students to high levels of achievement.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions

The majority of students at Greenbush Elementary School read independently and successfully at or above their grade levels. Good performance on the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination reading tests supports this—82% of the students achieved or exceeded the standard for basic understanding, and 62% achieved or exceeded the standard for analysis and interpretation. These successful readers effectively apply decoding skills, which allow them to read with fluency and expression. They know how to use a number of strategies to understand and discuss what they read. They enjoy learning and using new vocabulary words, and they read confidently as they approach reading tasks in all subjects. Students say they are excited to read and proudly note their progress in becoming better readers. While some students still struggle to read well and do not currently read at grade level, all students learn and practice strategies to assist them to become better readers. *(observing classes, following students, talking with students and teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Many students cannot independently and successfully solve problems despite working hard on them in academic and specialist classes. Students say that problem solving is “problems you have to solve and figure out,” but they often fail to come up with effective strategies to solve them. When deciding upon a strategy, students often require encouragement to rethink their choice and use of strategies. At times, their insufficient understanding of concepts and their lack of skills prevent them from being successful. Scores on the New Standards Reference Examination support this and show that many students have difficulty using math concepts and solving problems—only 39% of the students met or exceeded the standard for math concepts, and 30% met or exceeded the standard for problem solving. Although not all students are successful problem solvers, the majority of students seek out resources, such as manipulatives, visual aids, and their peers to help them. They also share their strategies, work cooperatively and frequently use math language and vocabulary from academic subjects. These behaviors and consistent hard work at problem solving show that students continue to make progress in this area. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with, students and school administrator, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers and parents, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Students practice writing in all subjects every day, and this helps them become better writers. They write competently, but they do not routinely produce 'wow' pieces of writing that include voice, rich details, sentence variety and effective organization. They often are satisfied with the quality of their writing, even when it does not meet the highest expectations as set by the classroom rubrics. Despite this absence of consistent high quality writing, they do know and use many tools of effective writers to produce adequate written work. They develop their ideas with graphic organizers and choose rich vocabulary from word walls, 'pencil books' and word charts. They use their knowledge of conventions to peer edit, 'whisper phones' to help revise their work and rubrics to improve their writing. Students say these tools help them write better and that they are better readers because they write a lot of stories. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students and teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, meeting with students and school administrator, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results)*

Students at Greenbush Elementary School are very well behaved. They pass through the halls and transition between activities in a quiet and orderly way. Students respect their school, their peers and their teachers. They enjoy coming to school everyday and, when asked, they say that this is a safe place to learn. They know what is expected of them and use the school's routines to learn and grow. Students work well together in all classes, help one another learn and accept one another's differences. They cheer one another on in their successes and say that it is their job to help their classmates learn. They approach their learning with excitement and appreciate the different learning activities their teachers provide including reading buddies, authors' circles and math games. They like the changes that are taking place in the school, such as the artwork in the halls, the basketball hoops for the playground and the after school clubs and programs. However, they would like further improvements in the playground and more to do at recess. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and parents, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Enjoy learning and like working together*
- ◆ *Value and respect one another's differences*
- ◆ *Know how to apply strategies and seek out resources*
- ◆ *Take pride in their achievements*
- ◆ *Use new vocabulary and rubrics across all subjects*

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Conclusions

Teachers successfully teach students to read well because they consistently incorporate the five components of the school-wide reading program into their daily instruction—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Parents say that students receive better reading instruction now than their older children previously received at this school. Teachers provide students with necessary strategies to read, such as decoding, sequencing and summarizing. They create safe environments for students to practice reading by using a variety of approaches, such as centers, small groups, games and literature circles. Teachers use assessments to guide their instruction and frequently change groupings in response to these ongoing assessments. Importantly, they use these same effective reading practices in all subjects they teach. Teachers say that their reading instruction is helping their students become better writers. Notably, teachers and the school administrator also say that this effective reading instruction has decreased the number of students who read below grade level and who are referred for special education evaluation. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, school improvement plan, classroom textbooks, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

Teachers adequately teach problem solving. They teach students different strategies, how to use rubrics to guide their problem solving, and provide manipulatives and calculators to support their learning. They also provide interesting and relevant problems and gather and use supplemental materials and resources. Most teachers effectively integrate problem solving in all subjects. These practices show that teachers recognize the importance of problem solving. Much of this teaching, however, does not reach every student in a way that allows all students to become competent problem solvers. Teachers primarily direct their lessons to whole classes. They do not allow students sufficient opportunities to share their solutions or to justify their explanations with their peers. Also, they do not satisfactorily monitor students as they problem solve or change their instruction in response to student difficulties. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers and parents, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Teachers competently teach writing. They do not, however, routinely provide the quality of instruction that ensures that all students produce exceptional work. Teachers require students to write in all subjects, and they have their students write everyday. They effectively teach what they emphasize: conventions, vocabulary development, and the use of graphic organizers. They provide rubrics and other classroom resources for writing. They connect writing to reading, as well as to their students' lives. However, most teachers do not require their students to produce accomplished writing. Writing standards, for example, are posted in all rooms, but teachers do not hold students to them. Most teachers do not devote sufficient time or effort to teaching writing. Teachers say that they currently do not have a balance between effective reading and writing instruction. These teachers do not sufficiently model good writing pieces or routinely conference with their students. They do not make their students develop their pieces beyond rough drafts to quality and finished products. Further, they over-rely on journals, summaries and simple sentence responses. While many teachers say that they have limited time to teach writing due to the reading program and their daily schedules, some teachers find a way to fit effective writing instruction into their busy day. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom textbooks, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results, reviewing district and school policies and practices, records of professional development activities)*

Teachers are dedicated to their students, their colleagues and their school. They benefit from the expert knowledge their colleagues freely make available to them, and they value one another's opinions. They collaborate well with their grade level teams and with the faculty and staff throughout the school. Teachers develop common lessons that cut across subjects and specialist areas, and they collaborate to support all students including those with special needs. Parents and the school and district administrators all say that the teachers and staff are the greatest strength of this school. Parents also say that the teachers "are amazing" and that they take a genuine interest in their children and care about "the whole child." *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, school administrators, 2004 SALT Survey report)*

Commendations for Greenbush Elementary School

Safe environment for learning

Strategies, rubrics and resources for success available to all students

Reading, writing and problem solving integrated throughout all subjects

Dedicated teachers

Effective teacher collaboration

Recommendations for Greenbush Elementary School

Revisit the writing standards, and require students to produce quality writing that is consistent with these standards.

Devote the time to model exceptional written work, and conference routinely with students to produce accomplished writing.

Monitor the independent and small group work of students more closely to adjust instruction to meet the needs of all students.

Provide more opportunities for students to share their solutions to problems and to justify their explanations with their peers in a variety of ways.

Continue to connect reading, writing and problem solving in all subject areas.

Continue to incorporate the five components of the school-wide reading program effectively into the daily instruction.

Continue to collaborate and share your knowledge with your colleagues to help all students learn.

Recommendations for West Warwick School Department

Provide professional development for teachers in the areas of writing and problem solving.

Continue to support teachers and staff with the implementation of the reading program.

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Conclusions

The principal is a leader who is well respected by the staff, teachers, parents, students and district administrators. The principal's commitment to his work is evident through his long work hours and his vision for Greenbush as a high-performing school. Notably, the principal walks through each classroom every day. Parents and students say he is a "person and not a figure you are afraid of." They also say "He knows everything going on and every child's name." Teachers say he "challenges us to be our best." The principal treats everyone fairly and is very supportive at all times. He works to raise the achievement level of all students and is personally involved in restructuring the services provided for students with special needs. Parents, staff and teachers say the principal interacts easily with the students, but they wish he would more openly and frequently communicate with them. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers and, parents)*

Greenbush Elementary School is in the first year of a Reading First grant, a program for K-3 reading instruction. The SALT Team concurs with the concerns of the teachers, the principal and the district administrators that this effective reading program may not be continued beyond this school year. This program has helped teachers provide quality reading instruction including phonemic awareness, fluency and ongoing assessments to monitor student reading. Teachers say that they have changed their teaching as a result of this program and that is why students are more successful. For example, only 14 first graders are now reading below the benchmark for oral reading fluency. Teachers also say that they like the organization and materials that have been provided for their use. Other teachers, however, report that the required 90-minute block of reading instruction limits their creativity, emphasizes reading instruction at the expense of writing and math instruction, and interferes with their ability to structure their scheduled instruction. Some teachers remain skeptical and say that they "love the program and hate the rigidity of the grant" and its requirements for classroom implementation and professional development. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, classroom textbooks, records of professional development activities)*

In response to the 'school in need of improvement' status, which identified students with disabilities as making insufficient progress, this school has improved its special education models. The social intervention classes meet students' individual behavioral needs and allow them to remain in school. The children respond to the 'level-system' that encourages appropriate behavior. Parents also like this system and say that the daily reports help them see the progress their children are making. The inclusion model places students with special needs in general education classes. Students in these classes are given support to reach higher levels of academic and social success. Teachers say all students benefit from this arrangement. Importantly, the district supports inclusion by providing extra planning time for teachers involved in this model. Commendably, the school continues to welcome a significant number of students with special needs from outside the Greenbush area of West Warwick. The SALT Team concurs with the concerns of the teachers, the principal and the district administrators that the inclusion model for special needs students may not be available beyond this school year. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, school improvement plan, district and school policies and practices, school and district report cards)*

Greenbush is a welcoming environment for learning. Parents say their children want to come here everyday and that this is a testimonial to this school. Respect is evident in all the interactions among staff and students. The involvement of classroom volunteers and community members is a valuable asset: the PTA supports many school-wide programs; the foster grandparents help teachers in the classrooms; and the school improvement team works with the principal to lead the school. The school continually self-assesses and changes in response to the needs it identifies. Two areas of concern are the need for further parental and community involvement and improved communication. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents and school administrators, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Greenbush School is clean, attractive and quiet. The school is in good condition and generally in good repair. The roof and carpeting however, remain a priority for all members of the school community and need to be replaced. Students say that they would like additional playground equipment. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Commendations for Greenbush Elementary School

Committed and respected principal

Welcoming environment

Effective inclusion model and improved social intervention classes

Acceptance and support of students with special needs from beyond the school area

Effective reading program

Recommendations for Greenbush Elementary School

Work to raise the achievement level of all students.

Improve communication between the principal, teachers, parents and the community.

Work with the district to replace the roof and carpeting throughout the school.

Expand family and community involvement within the school.

Continue the inclusion model and the Reading First program.

Continue to self-assess and make changes in response to the needs identified.

Continue to support and nurture all students.

Recommendations for West Warwick School Department

Support Greenbush School to continue the inclusion model and the Reading First program.

Replace the roof and carpeting throughout the school.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Continue to use the Reading First program to further improve reading success. Closely examine the strengths and limitations of this new program. Embrace the practices that yield positive results, and rework those that do not.

Find the time to teach effective writing, and use a variety of approaches while teaching problem solving. Teach these with the same rigor as you teach reading. Also, expand your efforts in professional development to include writing and problem solving.

Continue moving forward with the inclusion model for special needs students. Increase the number of classroom teachers involved in this important effort. This is your surest means to decrease the gap in performance between special needs and general education students. Carefully monitor the progress of all students toward academic standards.

In order for this school to continue to progress, you need to continue to be supportive of one another and remain open to reform. You have the expertise and commitment to move forward. We congratulate you on your efforts thus far and hope for your future successes.

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

Greenbush Elementary School

April 1, 2005

Catalpa Ltd. monitors all SALT visits and examines each SALT visit team report to determine whether it should be endorsed as a legitimate SALT report. The endorsement decision is based on procedures and criteria specified in *Endorsing SALT Visit Team Reports*. (available on Catalpa website). Catalpa Ltd. bases its judgment about the legitimacy of a report on these three questions:

Did the SALT visit team and the host school conduct the visit in a manner that is reasonably consistent with the protocol for the visit?

Do the conclusions of the report meet the tests for conclusions specified in the visit protocol (important, accurate, set in present, shows the team's judgment)?

Does the report meet the tests for a report as specified in the visit protocol (fair, useful, and persuasive of productive action)?

Using the answers to these questions, the final decision to endorse the report answers the overall endorsement question: Is this a legitimate SALT team visit report? In order to make this determination, Catalpa weighs all the questions and issues that have been raised to decide whether a report is legitimate or not. While it is possible that a challenge related to one of the three questions listed above would be serious enough to withhold or condition the endorsement, it is more likely that issues serious enough to challenge a report's legitimacy will cut across the three questions.

While the SALT visit protocol requires that all SALT visits are conducted to an exceptionally high standard of rigor, visits are "real-life" events; it is impossible to control for all unexpected circumstances that might arise. The protocol for the conduct of the visit is spelled out in the *Handbook for SALT Visit Chairs*, 1st edition.

Since unexpected circumstances might result in either the team or the school straying too far from the protocol for a visit, Catalpa monitors both the school and the team during a visit regarding the conduct of the visit.

Most often actual visit events or issues do not challenge a report's legitimacy and Catalpa's monitoring and endorsement is routine. A district administrator, principal, faculty member or parent may not like a report, or think it is too negative, or think the visit should have been conducted in a manner that is not consistent with the protocol. None of these represent a challenge to a report's legitimacy; concerns that might challenge an endorsement are based on events that stray too far from the protocol.

The Catalpa review of this visit and this report was routine.

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

- discussion with the chair about any issues related to the visit before it began
- daily discussion of any issues with the visit chair during the visit
- observation of a portion of the visit
- discussion with the principal regarding any concerns about the visit at the time of the visit
- thorough review of the report in both its pre-release and final version form

The findings from the review are:

1. This team was certified to meet team membership requirements by RIDE staff.
2. This report was produced by a legitimate SALT Visit that was led by a trained SALT Visit Chair and conducted in a manner that is consistent with SALT Visit procedures.
3. The conclusions are legitimate SALT visit conclusions.
4. The report is a legitimate SALT visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



Thomas A. Wilson, EdD
Catalpa Ltd.
April 28, 2005

REPORT APPENDIX

Sources of Evidence for This Report

In order to write this report the team examined test scores, student work, and other documents related to this school. The school improvement plan for Greenbush Elementary School was the touchstone document for the team. No matter how informative documents may be, however, there is no substitute for being at the school while it is in session—in the classrooms, in the lunchroom, and in the hallways. The team built its conclusions primarily from information about what the students, staff, and administrators think and do during their day. Thus, this visit allowed the team to build informed judgments about the teaching, learning, and support that actually takes place at Greenbush Elementary School.

The visit team collected its evidence from the following sources of evidence:

- ◆ *direct classroom observation*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 8 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*
 - teachers*
 - school improvement team*
 - school and district administrators*
 - students*
 - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
 - district and school policies and practices*
 - records of professional development activities*
 - classroom assessments*
 - school improvement plan for Greenbush Elementary School*
 - district strategic plan*
 - 2004 SALT Survey report*
 - classroom textbooks*
 - 2004 Information Works!*
 - 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries*
 - 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
 - School and District Report Cards*

Family Learning Night Binder
Emergency Procedure Binder
School Improvement Team Minutes Binder
Teacher Evaluation Manual Binder
Reporting to Parents Binder
NEASC Report Binder

State Assessment Results for Greenbush Elementary School

Assessment results create pieces of evidence that the visit team uses as it conducts its inquiry. The team uses this evidence to shape its efforts to locate critical issues for the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in four different ways:

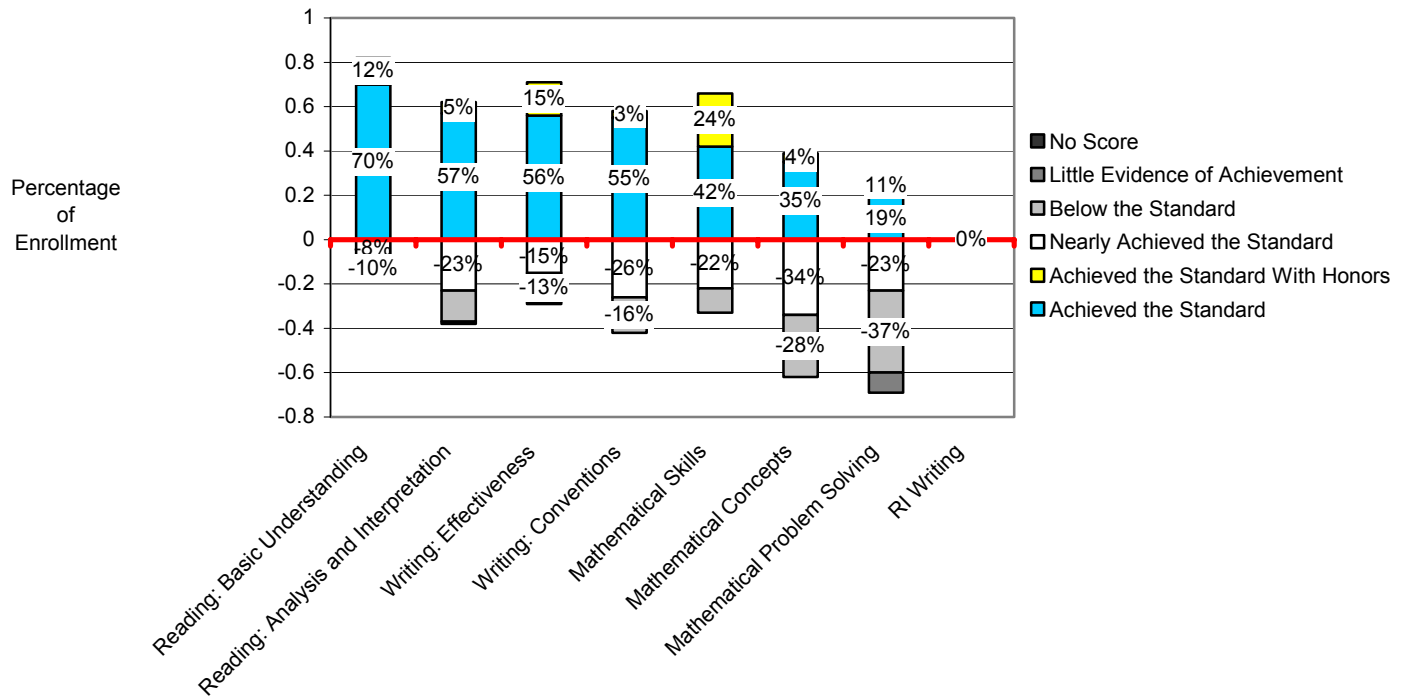
- ◆ *against performance standards;*
- ◆ *compared to similar students in the state;*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school;*
- ◆ *and over time.*

RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The first display shows how well the students do in relation to standards in English/Language Arts and mathematics. Student results are shown as the percentage of students taking the test whose score places them in the various categories at, above, or below the performance standard. Endorsed by the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education in 1998, the tested standards can be found in the publication *New Standards Performance Standards*.

Table 1. 2003-2004 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments

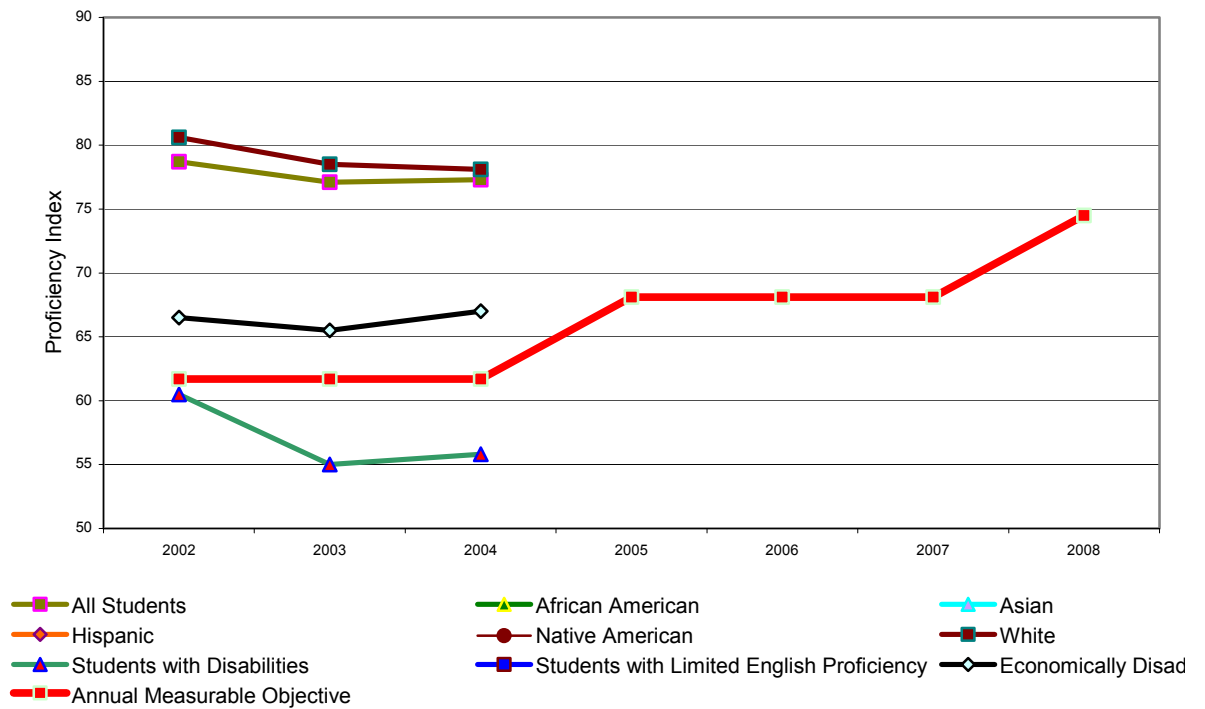
Greenbush Elementary School State Assessment Results of 2004

**RESULTS ACROSS STUDENT GROUPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL**

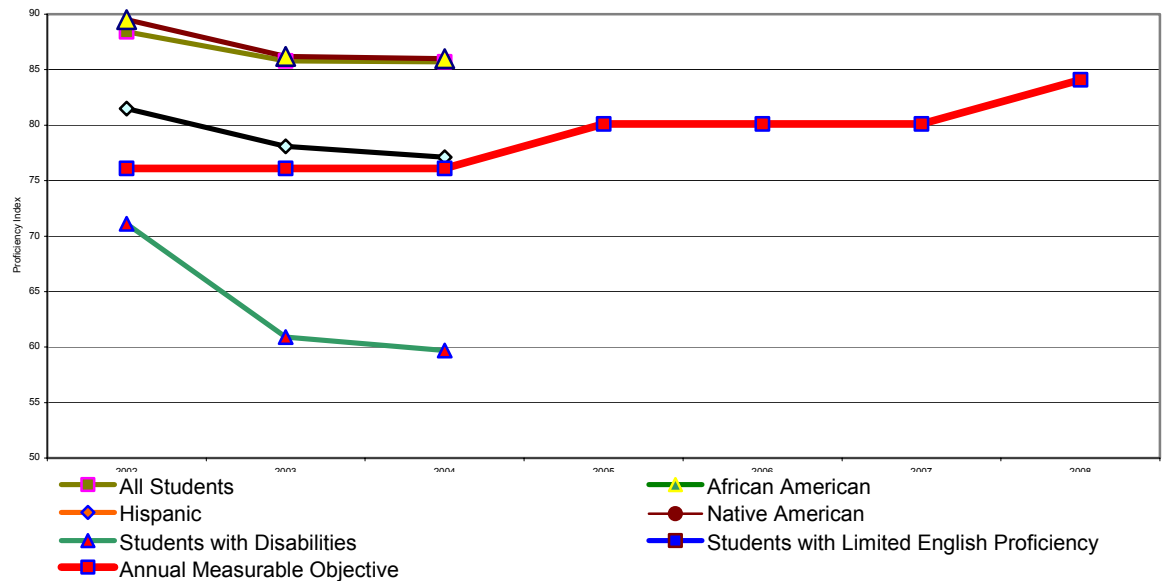
An important way to display student results is across different groups of students who are in the school. This display shows targets and index scores and reflects the new requirements of the No Child Left Behind federal legislation. Since breaking students into these smaller groups can result in groups becoming too small to show accurate results, this display shows groups with 45 or more students across three years of testing. Any student group whose index scores do not meet the targets set by RIDE require additional attention to close its performance gaps.

Table 2. 2002-2003 Student Results across Subgroups

Annual Proficiency, Greenbush Elementary School, Grade 4 Math



Annual Proficiency, Greenbush Elementary School, Grade 4 ELA



REPORT CARD FOR GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This Report Card show the performance of Greenbush Elementary School compared to the school's annual measurable objectives (AMO).

These report card scores describe Greenbush Elementary School as a School In Need of Improvement/Insufficient Progress.

Table 4. Report Card for Greenbush Elementary School

2004 Rhode Island School Report Card

RI SCHOOL: GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
RI DISTRICT: WEST WARWICK

GRADE: 04

INDEX PROFICIENCY SCORE, 2002-04	ENGLISH LANG. ARTS TARGET SCORE: 76.1				MATHEMATICS TARGET SCORE: 61.7			
STUDENT GROUP	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE
All Students	85.7	YES	83.6	86.1	77.3	YES	74.8	77.5
African Americans	*	YES	*	77.8	*	YES	*	65.9
Asian	*	YES	*	84.5	*	YES	*	77.1
Hispanic	*	YES	81.5	75.8	*	YES	69.1	65.8
Native Americans	*	YES	*	83.9	*	YES	*	73
White	86	YES	84	88.5	78.1	YES	75.5	82
Students with Disabilities	59.7	NO	65.7	69.5	55.8	NO	61.8	66.4
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	*	68.9	*	YES	*	61
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	77.1	YES	78.3	77.8	67	YES	69	68.4

PERCENT OF STUDENTS TESTED, 2002-04	Target: 95%			
	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE
English Language Arts	100	YES	99.9	99.1
Mathematics	100	YES	100	99.4

ATTENDANCE RATE	Target: 90%			
	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE
	95.9	YES	94.6	94.8

TARGETS MET/MISSED, THIS SCHOOL		
	TARGETS MET	TARGETS MISSED
English Language Arts Index Score	8	1
Mathematics Index Score	8	1
Percent Tested	2	0
Attendance Rate	1	0

THIS SCHOOL IS CLASSIFIED AS:

School in Need of Improvement/Insufficient Progress

KEY: * Student group has too few students to calculate results.
† "Safe Harbor" - Student group has fallen short of the target but has made sufficient improvement over last year's score.
†† Student group has met the target based only on the most recent year of test results.

NOTE: For information on targets and classifications, please see [Quick Guide](#).

Information Works! data for Greenbush Elementary School is available at <http://www.rido.net>.

THE GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Mark Andrews
Principal

Pamela Amaral
Supervisory Aide

Jennifer Caputo
Parent

Patricia D'Alfonso
Teacher

Kathleen Fillo
Teacher

Lynette Gemma
Teacher

Tammy Kelly
Parent

Nina Kritter
Parent

Carolyn Kullberg
Teacher

Judith Manganelli
Teacher

Donna Orpwood
Parent

Denise Rondeau
Teacher

Alyson Satchell
Teacher

Margaret Szeliga
Teacher

MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM

Andre Audette
Standards Coach
Pawtucket School Department
Office of School Improvement and Support Services
Rhode Island Department of Education
Regents SALT Fellow
Team Chair

Angela Conway
Grade 5 Intensive Resource Teacher
Carl G. Lauro School
Providence School Department
Providence, Rhode Island

Amy Dorfman
Preschool Inclusion Teacher
North Smithfield Elementary School
North Smithfield School Department
North Smithfield, Rhode Island

Suzanne Fowler
Grade 2 Teacher
Harold F. Scott School
Warwick School Department
Warwick, Rhode Island

Paulette Hughes
Grade 5 Teacher
Henry J. Winters School
Pawtucket School Department
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Erin Matheu
Grade 4 Teacher
Western Coventry School
Coventry School Department
Coventry, Rhode Island

Mary Sue Mulligan
Principal
William R. Dutemple Elementary School
Cranston School Department
Cranston, Rhode Island

Claudia Zajchowski
Special Needs Grades 1-2 Teacher
Northern Early Learning Center
Lincoln School Department
Lincoln, Rhode Island